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ABSTRACT

This module, which may be used as the basis for a workshop or as a special topic unit in adult basic education or English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) courses, discusses supervisors and teamwork. It is designed to teach about differences between supervision in different kinds of workplaces; getting along and ahead with mainstream supervisors; and getting along and ahead in a team-based workplace. The module contains the following: an overview of the topic; specific skills that the module emphasizes; and teaching points, learning activities, resources, and commercial textbooks. A sample lesson plan begins with a cover sheet with objectives, learners and context, room setup, to bring, to do ahead, media used, and steps. The lesson plan indicates time required, materials required, and teacher and student activities. Other contents include overhead transparency masters, handouts, presurvey, and postassessment. The objectives for this module are as follows: describe "teamwork" at home or at work; discuss team members' roles; create a supervisor's assessment check list; and define qualities of an ideal supervisor. (YLB)

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ED 416 361

LAES
Latino Adult Education Services

Tierra de Oportunidad

MODULE 24

Supervisors and Teamwork

Ed Kissam and Holda Dorsey

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INSTRUCTIONAL AREA
Advancing Work And Career

MODULE 24
Supervisors and Teamwork

Overview

The industries in which most immigrant workers are employed are very different than those of mainstream American business. Farmwork, restaurant work, construction, construction cleanup, house cleaning, janitorial work, the garment industry, and low-end manufacturing operations are all workplaces where, aside from low wages, working conditions are difficult, sometimes due to conflicts with supervisors.

Many supervisors in small, informal businesses like restaurants may care deeply about the people who work for them and treat them like family. But many other supervisors abuse workers psychologically, treating them arbitrarily and unfairly, getting angry with them for reasons unrelated to the work, because the supervisors are themselves inexperienced or untrained, or, in some cases, because a company's strategy for controlling the workers is to intimidate them.

Immigrant workers are generally quite experienced in dealing with poor supervision, even so, they may benefit from additional reflection and information-sharing about how to deal with ineffective supervisors. At the same time, they need to know what they can expect from effective supervisors and how their efforts to build good working relationships with supervisors and co-workers can pay off in the form of advancement into more personally satisfying jobs and, eventually, into upward career mobility.

Immigrant workers also need to be introduced to the idea of workplaces structured on the basis of teams which are responsible for managing their own work, for making suggestions to improve the way work is done, and then, implementing them. On the one hand, the idea of mutualism, people pitching in to work and make things better for everyone is a traditional and familiar one, but many immigrants may think they left this kind of cooperation behind when they came to the United States.

It is also important to introduce learners to the idea that the kind of informal teamwork which plays such a large role in family life is a sound basis for practicing and strengthening the skills needed to work productively and successfully in many U.S. workplaces and participating successfully in community life.

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Effective teamwork in larger companies involves building good communication, concern about others' well-being and progress, and cooperation which takes place in well-functioning families. However, team work in many companies does often involve more competition than within the family. One way in which workplace teamwork is like the familiar sports team is that it focuses on the "bottom line" -- some form of winning against adversaries.

Good workplace teamwork requires that everyone on the team take initiative and pitch in to make things work out. It also anticipates that workers willingly assume leadership while, at the same time, respecting the authority of supervisors, managers, and others in the workplace community. Showing leadership and a willingness to work with others to solve problems are important ways for employees to stand out and show their employers that they are good candidates for promotion. Like extended families and small towns, co-workers in many companies get to know each other well, and one's good reputation counts.

As telecommunications technology increases, workplace teams involve people working with other people who are located at a distant site, perhaps in another city or even in another country. Also, as teamwork becomes a more integral part of the workplace the size and diversity of teams increases. An important skill for all workers, in these organizations, is to be able to get along well and work closely with people very different from them.

One of the challenges of new modes of teamwork is that not all coordination rests on personal communication, such as talking and planning with co-workers. Some teamwork communication takes place via memos, e-mail, company policies, and periodically reviewing plans about priorities, goals, and processes for getting one or another thing done. Thus, increasing skills are needed in recognizing the implications of each of these different modes of communication.

Adult education classrooms can themselves be structured to build and reinforce class members' skills as productive team members. Organizing classroom activities to maximize the amount of time class members can spend in team roles such as discussing problems, comparing, contrasting and rating possible solutions, coaching, counseling each other, and assuming individual responsibility for what happens to the group are powerful strategies for building teamwork skills.

The adult education classroom can also usefully adopt some of the staff development principles from contemporary corporate training research. For example, in setting up teams, instructors can be sure that everyone is nudged to try out different roles. In the same way, students can explore how best to balance their own self-interest with concern for others by discussing and negotiating activities in the classroom-- what to focus on, tradeoffs, and mutual expectations.

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Basic Skills Development

Basic Skills	using both oral and written modes of communication for problem-solving and exchanging information, understanding the implications of different types of organizational communication, e.g. memos, handbooks, bulletin boards, team meetings. Practice active and expressive communication: questioning, discussing, critiquing, counseling, coaching, paraphrasing, explaining.
Thinking Skills	identifying and discussing problems, comparing alternative competing solutions, testing potential strategies, evaluating how well different strategies work, choosing one, or several, approaches which work best for a team; recognizing differences in individual perspectives and objectives, practicing harmonizing objectives to achieve "win-win" solutions wherever possible.
Uses Resources	building on home country and family experience with cooperation, recognizing and valuing positive character traits, recognizing the value of time in a stressful environment, valuing personal support and social networks, utilizing human resources to help solve problems which affect an entire group.
Interpersonal Skills -	recognizing family interactions as involving teamwork, considering the different roles of each individual in a team, recognizing each different team member's needs for support from others in the team, expanding team membership to include outsiders, changing competitive relationships into cooperative partnerships.
Uses Information	critically assessing information from different sources, comparing, contrasting, and evaluating different opinions and personal perspectives, discussing the pros and cons of proposed solutions.
Works With Systems	understanding the differences in the structure of workplaces with informal, traditional, supervision, and those with formal, systems for supervising employees, understanding team-based workplace management as an alternative, understanding how co-workers and supervisors can help one's career advancement.
Uses Technology	selects and uses the appropriate technology for the task, including computers and online systems.

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Teaching Points

Differences Between Supervision in Different Kinds of Workplace

1. **Supervisors, including owners who supervise their employees directly, in industries employing immigrants tend to have a broader scope of absolute authority than in mainstream workplaces.** In these kinds of informal workplaces in immigrant-dominated industries, getting along requires probably more flexibility than in other workplaces but it still may not pay off because, even though supervisors have a great deal of authority over those they supervise, they may not have much authority to change the ways things are done. In contrast, supervisors in the mainstream industries can often do a great deal to promote workers, transfer them to new assignments which take advantage of their skills, or, otherwise, help a worker get ahead.

2. **Supervisors in smaller industries employing immigrants often know the workers they supervise better than supervisors in larger industries. This has benefits and disadvantages.** In mainstream companies, workers should try systematically to get their supervisors to recognize them and recognize that they are effective workers, not assuming this is obvious. In informal workplaces, workers should try hard to keep personal relationships and family alliances, from negatively affecting relationships at work, and foster such off-work relationships that may help relations at work.

3. **Supervisors in small industries employing immigrants usually become supervisors because they are, experienced workers, or they have a good personal or family relationship with the company owner, or they have been at the firm a long time. Usually they do not have experience in supervising.** They may, for example, supervise workers as though the workers were their children, treating them in an authoritarian way and rewarding or punishing them. In many, but not all, mainstream industries, the company spends some time and money in teaching supervisors how to supervise well.
4. **Many mainstream companies have formal policies about what is effective supervision and ineffective supervision and what rights workers have when they feel their supervisors treated them unfairly,** in contrast to immigrant-dominated industries. However, although these policies give workers in mainstream workplaces more rights, a worker who considers complaining informally or filing a formal complaint should know that the company presumption is usually in favor of the supervisor, not the worker they supervise.

5. **At companies where workers are covered by a union contract, workers have legally specified rights to file grievances and a union representative will be available to advise them of their rights and to help them in a conflict with their supervisor.** However, even in this situation, workers should very carefully

evaluate whether it is to their benefit to rock the boat. Surely, it is sometimes worthwhile but not always.

6. **While companies which have only informal supervision are adamantly opposed to any kind of worker organizing, the reality is that such companies do bend to pressure from workers.** A group of workers, who is planning to exert this kind of pressure must recognize that these situations are seldom resolved easily and that they will need to work systematically and hard with co-workers to bring about improvements in workplace supervision. This effort is, nonetheless, often worthwhile because it can make such a difference in the level of stress workers experience and their sense of well-being. These kinds of informal worker organizing usually do not work at larger, more formally structured companies, although organizing efforts specifically oriented toward forming a union are very strongly protected by law.

Getting Along and Ahead with Mainstream Supervisors

7. **In the mainstream workplace, supervisors are expected to be teachers or coaches,** helping the workers they supervise do a better job and become more productive workers. It is reasonable to expect some level of help from supervisors in dealing with new problems, in learning to work smarter. An important way for workers to advance in their careers is to demonstrate their skills as learners. Initiating talks with supervisors about wanting to get ahead is a practical way to start the process.

8. **In the mainstream workplace, supervisors are often held accountable for how well the unit they are supervising is doing,** for example, the incidence of defects in modules their team is assembling, numbers of customer complaints, hotels' survey of customer satisfaction, or unit output. It is useful for workers to fully understand what worries or motivates supervisors and communicate their awareness of those concerns and their willingness to pitch in to make things work better.

9. **In the mainstream workplace, company policies spell out the duties of supervisors and of workers.** Workers should be aware that, in most cases, supervisors are expected to regularly evaluate the performance of the employees they supervise. Workers should be introduced of the idea of being evaluated on the basis of explicit criteria and become familiar with those being used where they work, if there is such a process. Workers should be aware that one objective for periodic formal performance review is as a learning experience.

10. **In the mainstream workplace, supervisors are expected to have some flexibility in responding to individual workers' needs.** There are some areas where flexibility may be possible e.g., flex-time and trading schedules when a child is ill, and some where it may not be e.g., workplace dress and grooming. Before

they broach the issue of accommodating an individual concern, workers should learn what supervisors can do and what they can not do. Workers should learn to justify their requests, taking into account what they know about supervisors' concerns.

11. **In the mainstream workplace, the way to get ahead may be to move horizontally into another work area,** where one's skills are more applicable, where one likes the work more, or where there are more opportunities for upward career mobility.

Getting Along and Ahead in a Team-based Workplace

12. **The companies which have adopted a team-based approach to structuring work have usually done so because the particular kind of work they are involved in goes better** when workers work in a coordinated way or when there is a bonus on problem-solving, innovative, or creative solutions to challenges at work. So, not surprisingly, there are superior communication skills, analytical thinking, and interpersonal skills in this sort of workplace.

13. **In team-based workplaces, teams are often expected to be self-managing, that is team members become their own supervisors.** They should recognize, then, that they must focus on building their own skills in self-evaluation, in helping others to learn and to learn oneself from others, in negotiating solutions to conflicts. They should also recognize that they are, as a group, accountable for how things are going and that the group has the right to expect every member of the team to do their fair share and, consequently, the need to help less-skilled, less-cooperative, or less-productive workers do better.

14. **To acknowledge everyone's values is a fundamental principle in teams' group discussions,** particularly those which are oriented toward problem-solving. The team members admit everyone's values and perspectives and recognize everyone's contributions while, at the same time, advocate one's own point of view.

15. **Another fundamental principle in team-building is that each member of the team has their own role and responsibility but that roles may, at times, need to be interchangeable.** Particularly, if there is a role which no one wants to play, e.g., notes-taker or coach, then it may be desirable for people to rotate through that role. Instructors should point out that the existence of a team does not necessarily mean that every team member has the same level of authority and responsibility. Being together in a team does, however, mean that people need to consult and communicate with each other even if they are not equal within the organization.

16. **Teams work best when people help each other out.** However, they only continue to work well when some team members do not become chronic

takers leaving others to be chronic givers. Team members should be sensitive to the number of chips they may accumulate or spend by helping others out or asking for help and try to even things out. This is a familiar concept to Mexican immigrants as a similar kind of mutualism is the basis of *compadrazgo*.

In General – Building Skills in Teamwork

17. **People's experience working cooperatively in a family, toward a common goal, is a solid basis for learning how to work collaboratively as part of a team with strangers.** However people should not bring poor habits from their family relationships into the workplace, i.e., being constantly demanding, arguing, being overly critical, being bossy. Strangers will not respond as predictably as family members.

18. **People's experience working cooperatively in civic organizations is also a solid and even more advanced foundation for understanding how to work cooperatively in the workplace.** Learners should be urged to reflect carefully on what kind of experience they have had in the past in working cooperatively, e.g., in church activities, the PTA, in community projects in their hometown, and how these can translate into career advancement in the United States.

19. Building teamwork skills can lead to increasing supervisory responsibilities and, eventually, into management, even in a workplace where there is no official recognition of teams. It is an effective first step on a career path. As companies focus more and more on being "learning organizations", experience in teaching, counseling, and coaching co-workers is increasingly marketable as a skill.

Sample Learning Activities

** Note -- Some of these exercises may involve students discussing sensitive information. Before initiating such exercises, it would be wise to discuss with the class, the principle that the classroom is a "safe place" and that all information which comes up in class should be considered entirely confidential*

1. Poll the class asking how each rates their current supervisor and tabulate behaviors people think make for effective or ineffective supervision. Remind the class that supervisors include the homeowners whose houses they may clean, whose garden they may tend, contractors who hire workers at drive-by street corners, and family members in family run businesses. Share information about strategies class members have developed to get along with ineffective supervisors. Also list the kind of work each class member does. Are there any conclusions the class can draw about supervision in one kind of workplace or industry as contrasted with another?

2. Ask each class member to describe the most effective supervisor they worked for and why that person was the best supervisor; and also describe the least effective supervisor they worked for and why they were rated as being ineffective. Then, ask the students to discuss whether they think they took full advantage of what the effective supervisors had to offer and how they could have benefited more from working with them.

3. Ask each class member to discuss what they would do differently if they were to change roles with their current supervisor. Are there any common themes which emerge from this discussion?

4. Ask class members to discuss whether they feel that they work as a team with co-workers where they work. To decide whether their workplace is like a team or not they might compare it to a soccer team in terms of -- assigned roles, encouraging each other, coordination for a common goal, good days and bad days, etc. For workers who do not feel that their workplace is based on teamwork, would working as a team make any difference in how well things went -- for them as workers? for the customers, for the company manager or owner?

5. Invite a panel of three personnel officers from medium to large local employers, including the school itself, to discuss the basics of personnel management, what they seek as the characteristics of effective and ineffective supervisors, and what they do to improve the ability of supervisors to supervise. After the discussion on their approaches, you might ask the panelists to present how their duties, priorities and strategies differ and explain why that might be.

6. Invite a local union business agent or other representative to talk to the class about the kinds of procedures their contract has to cover conflicts between supervisors and the employees they supervise, how the grievance process works, and the sorts of problems they most commonly face as union business agents in connection with supervision.

7. Invite a manager from a large local company to talk to the class about the kinds of career pathways there are within their own company and others with a particular emphasis on horizontal transfers. If possible, invite a manager from a company which organizes its workplace on the basis of teams.

8. Invite three supervisors from local businesses in leading local industries (preferably those which have a large immigrant workforce, but not from a company where any of the class members work) to talk to the class about what they look for in an effective worker, the kinds of problems they face as supervisors, and how they resolve those problems. After the guests have left

ask the class to discuss how these supervisors' perspectives compare to those of their own supervisors.

9. Invite a conflict mediation specialist, either a volunteer working with the local bar association or a lawyer specializing in conflict mediation, to talk to the class about the principles of conflict mediation.

10. Set up a role-playing exercise in which class members pair off -- with one playing the role of supervisor, one the role of the employee. Ask the class member playing the role of supervisor to fill out the sample performance review form (see resources below) to rate their classmate. The sample form should be filled out by the mock supervisor reflecting upon how he or she would rate himself/herself. The mock supervisor will then present the evaluation form to the mock supervisee who responds by going through a series of questions how they might best demonstrate a willingness to learn and do better. The mock supervisor will then provide suggestions and advice for improvement. Ask other class members to advise the role-playing duo how they could do better as supervisor or supervisee.

Resources

1. Sample performance review form.

There are many management and organizational structure books available in most bookstores. Instructors might prepare for doing this module by reviewing one or two of these books which look particularly interesting to them.

2. Studs Terkel, **Working**

3. Anthony Carnevale, **Workplace Basics: The Skills Employers Want**, American Society for Training and Development/U.S. Department of Labor, 1991.

4. Anthony Carnevale, **America and the New Economy**, American Society for Training and Development/U.S. Department of Labor, 1991.

5. The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, **Teaching the SCANS Competencies**, U.S. Department of Labor, 1993.

6. The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, **Learning a Living: A SCANS Report for America 2000**, U.S. Department of Labor, 1992.

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Commercial Textbooks

Attitudes on the Job, Educational Design, Inc.
Ch. 4, Accepting Orders On the Job
Ch. 5, Getting Along With Others On the Job

Building Success, Steck-Vaughn
P. 35, Who's the Boss

ESL For Action, Addison - Wesley
Unit III, Talking With Co-Workers, Talking With the Boss
Unit IX, Working With Americans

Job Survival Skills, Educational Design, Inc.
Ch. 3, Cooperation with the Employer
Ch. 4, Cooperation with Co-workers

Ready to Work, Contemporary Books
Ch. 10, Succeeding At Work

The Working Culture, Prentice Hall
Ch. 3, Together and Separate: Living and Working in a Multi-cultural Country

150 Ways to Keep Your Job, J. Weston Walch
P. 29, Being Part of the Team
Ch. 3, Getting Along With Your Boss

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24. SUPERVISORS AND TEAMWORK

OBJECTIVES

- describe "teamwork" at home or at work;
- discuss team members roles;
- create a supervisor's assessment check list;
- define qualities of ideal supervisor

LEARNERS & CONTEXT

Adult students. Average ability of the group is medium. The range of ability is wide. Motivation is high. Group size is between 11 and 30. There are many learners whose English is limited.

ROOM SETUP

Chairs and tables to facilitate small team work.

TO BRING

Flip chart, sticky dots

TO DO AHEAD

MEDIA USED

Overhead, print, flip chart, sticky-dots

STEPS

Why a team?
Introduction
Experience
Who does what
Giving Feedback
Break
The supervisor
Define the ideal
Report back
Assess
Create a check list
Reflection
Closure

Lesson Plan: 24. Supervisors and Teams

	Why a team?	Teacher asks students: " In your country, did you work as a team with your family to get things done? How about with your neighbors, did you work together, helping each other?"
(10 min)	*Motivation* *• Establish Relevance to Past*	"Teamwork is very important in family life, it allows us to practice and strengthen the skills needed to work productively and successfully in the workplace. "
	overhead	"Many U.S. workplaces are set up in teams which are responsible for managing their own work, for making suggestions to improve the way work is done, for implementing the suggestions and for monitoring the quality of work."
		"This kind of Teamwork eliminates errors, makes people cooperate rather than compete, establishes good relationships among employees, suppliers and customers, improvement and quality become a continuous process."
		"Building on your family experience with cooperation, helps you adapt to the new U.S. workplace."
	Introduction	Teacher states the objectives.
(10 min)	*Information Preview* *• State Objectives Informally*	You will be able to: describe "teamwork" at home or at work; discuss team members roles;
	overhead	create a supervisor's assessment check list; define qualities of ideal supervisor.
		You will also practice: recognizing teamwork skills; identifying team roles; using encouragement signs or words; assessing and utilizing human resources.
	Experience	Teacher asks students to sit in groups of four. Each group is to choose one of the jobs listed on the transparency, or a job that they had themselves.
(15 min)	*Motivation* *• Establish Relevance to Past*	(Teacher shows transparency).
	overhead	Teacher gives the following directions: On a sheet of paper each member of the group writes what kind of helpers assist the main worker in the chosen job. Member one writes and passes the paper to the right, then member two writes and passes the paper, etc.
		Students do the activity, discussing their ideas with their group. Teacher walks around, monitors and assists as needed.
		Groups report back to the general group.

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Lesson Plan: 24. Supervisors and Teams

	Who does what *Practice & Feedback* • *Group Practice - Guided* *overhead*	Teacher describes how each person working with her has their own role. a) aide - works with some students, collects registration forms from new students, helps with realia and board displays. b) placement aide - registers and tests students, sends information to teacher. c) materials attendant - makes xerox copies and transparencies. d) resource teacher - purchases new materials, provides new ideas. Teacher asks students to analyze and discuss the roles of each worker on their group list. Teacher monitors and assists as necessary. Students report back to the whole classroom.
(15 min)	**Giving Feedback** *Closure* • *Reflection*	Teacher asks students to reflect for a minute on what kind of encouragement signs or words were used to let them know that they did their jobs well as members of a team. Or how they have encouraged others to do their best. Students report their reflections orally. Teacher or student helpers write the information on the board. Students review the list and select three encouragement signs or words that they would like to use in the classroom.
10:10 AM *(10 min)*	**Break** *Other* • *Break*	Students may take a few minutes to stretch, walk around, change places. Teacher completes attendancerecords and other paperwork.
(20 min)	**The supervisor** *Information Acquisition* • *Silent Reading* *print*	Teacher asks students to work in pairs. Each member of the pair will get a different version of the the reading "Getting Along With Supervisors". Students are to read silently to themselves. After students have completed their reading, they are to explain their segment to their partners.

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Lesson Plan: 24. Supervisors and Teams

Define the Ideal

(10 min) *Practice & Feedback*
- *Brainstorming*

Teacher asks students to work in groups of four.
Students are to generate a list of qualities that they believe a supervisor should have.

Report back

(15 min) *Practice & Feedback*
- *Group Feedback*

flipchart

Teacher asks representatives from the groups to stand and calls on one to read the list.
Teacher or assistant records items on flip chart.
When the first person finishes, teacher asks the next rep to read those items on the list that were not mentioned.
Then the next rep and so forth until there are no more items.

Lists are posted around the room.

Assess

(15 min) *Practice & Feedback*
- *Creative Practice*

sticky-dots

Teacher gives each student 5 sticky-dots.
Students walk around the room, read the charts and use their dots to select those qualities that they believe an ideal supervisor should have.

When all the dots are used, the group collectively selects those items that received the most dots and discusses their value.

Create a check list

(10 min) *Practice & Feedback*
- *Creative Practice*

Teacher asks students to work in groups of four to design a check list for assessing the performance of a supervisor using the top ten qualities chosen.

Reflection

(15 min) *Closure*
- *Student Self-Test*

print

Teacher asks students to reflect not only on what they learned but also on the team work that they did.

After a couple of minutes of reflection, teacher hands out the self assessment check list and asks students to complete it.

Teacher monitors and assists students as needed.

After students complete the assignment, teacher asks if any one would like to

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their reflection.

	Closure	Teacher reviews the objectives, students give verbal examples.
(15 min)	*Closure* *• Learner Summary* *overhead*	You are able to: describe "teamwork" at home or at work; discuss team members roles; create a supervisor's assessment check list; define qualities of ideal supervisor. You also practiced: recognizing teamwork skills; identifying team roles; using encouragement signs or words; assessing and utilizing human resources.

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TEAMWORK

Team in the family:

- **practice and strengthen skills to be productive and successful.**

Teams in the U.S. workplace are responsible for:

- **managing their own work;**
- **making suggestions for improvement;**
- **implementing the suggestions;**
- **monitoring quality.**

Teamwork is successful because:

- **eliminates errors;**
- **creates cooperation;**
- **fosters good relationships;**
- **continuous improvement and quality.**

OBJECTIVES

You will be able to:

- **describe "teamwork" at home or at work;**
- **discuss team members roles;**
- **create a supervisor's assessment check list;**
- **define qualities of ideal supervisor.**

You will also practice:

* **recognizing teamwork skills;**
* **identifying team roles;**
* **using encouragement signs or words;**
* **assessing and utilizing human resources.**

Working As A Team

List at least four people who work with the employee listed below:

Auto Mechanic

_____

_____

_____

Bus Driver

_____

_____

_____

Restaurant Worker

_____

_____

_____

Store Clerk

_____

_____

_____

Office Worker

_____

_____

_____

Truck Driver

_____

_____

_____

Factory Worker

_____

_____

_____

Construction Worker

_____

_____

_____

Farm Worker

_____

_____

_____

Doctor

_____

_____

_____

Your Job

_____

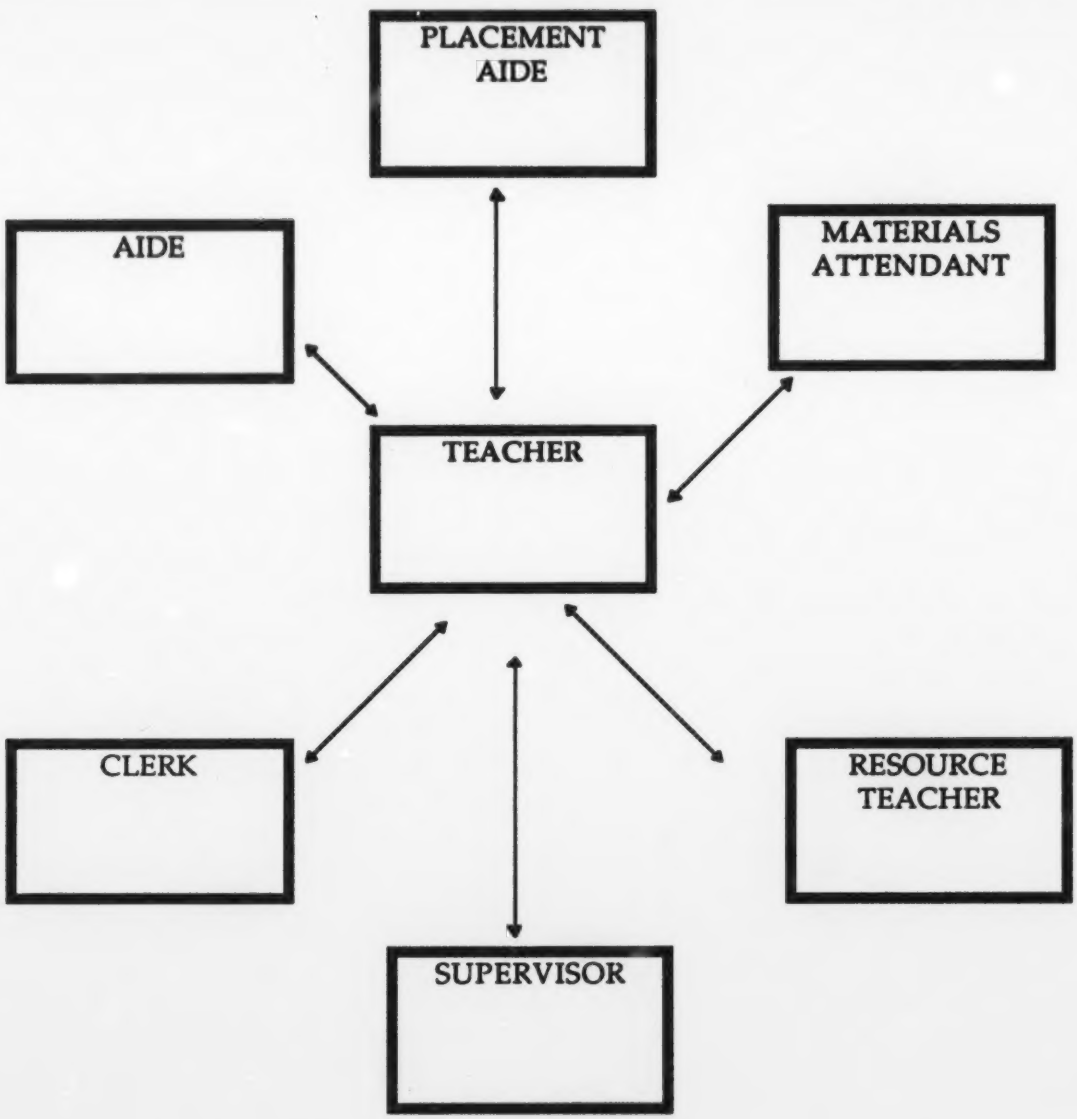
_____

Other

_____

_____

Who Does What?



Getting Along With Supervisors

In some U.S. workplaces, supervisors are expected to be teachers or coaches, helping the workers they supervise do a better job and become more productive workers.

Employees can also expect some level of help from supervisors in dealing with new problems, in learning to work smarter.

An important way for workers to advance in their careers is to demonstrate their skills as learners. Initiating talks with supervisors about wanting to get ahead is a practical way to start the process.

Supervisors are often held accountable for how well the unit they are supervising is doing, for example, the number of defects in modules their team is assembling, numbers of customer complaints, surveys of customer satisfaction, or unit output.

It is useful for workers to fully understand what worries or motivates supervisors and communicate their awareness of those concerns and their willingness to pitch in to make things work better for the team.

Getting Along With Supervisors

In some U.S. workplaces, company policies spell out the duties of supervisors and of workers.

Workers should be aware that, in most cases, supervisors are expected to regularly evaluate the performance of the employees they supervise.

Workers should be introduced of the idea of being evaluated on the basis of explicit criteria and become familiar with those being used where they work, if there is such a process.

Workers should be aware that one objective of periodic formal performance reviews is as a learning experience.

Supervisors are expected to have some flexibility in responding to individual workers' needs.

There are some areas where flexibility may be possible e.g., flex-time and trading schedules when a child is ill, and some where it may not be, for example, workplace dress and grooming.

Before workers broach the issue of accommodating an individual concern, they should learn what supervisors can do and what they can not do.

Workers should learn to justify their requests, taking into account what they know about supervisors' concerns.

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Self Assessment
How well do I work with the team?

	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. Am I punctual?	____	____	____	____
2. Am I cooperative?	____	____	____	____
3. Am I neat?	____	____	____	____
4. Am I careful?	____	____	____	____
5. Do I follow directions?	____	____	____	____
6. Do I argue a lot?	____	____	____	____
7. Do I talk a lot about other things?	____	____	____	____
8. Am I polite?	____	____	____	____
9. Do I do my share of work?	____	____	____	____
10. Do I collaborate with the team?	____	____	____	____
11. Do I seek and give information?	____	____	____	____
12. Do I help other team members?	____	____	____	____
13. Do I offer suggestions?	____	____	____	____
14. Do I encourage other members to participate?	____	____	____	____
15. Do I listen carefully to others opinions?	____	____	____	____
16. Do I support the team decisions?	____	____	____	____
17. Do I contribute to the team success?	____	____	____	____
18. Do I respond constructively to feedback?	____	____	____	____

I am very good at _____

I need to work on_____

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Date: _____

Student Name _____

Teacher Name _____

Student Survey
Supervisors and Teamwork

1. If you had to talk with your supervisory or boss about the areas listed below, how confident are you that you know all you need to know to communicate your point of view?

	For each row, please check the box that applies to you			
	Not very confident	A Little confident	Very confident	Have all the information I need
a. Overtime regulations				
b. Compensation time regulations versus Overtime				
c. Family leave or personal leave				
d. Flex time				
e. Cal OSHA safety regulations for your job or workplace				
f. Job dress codes				
g. Breaks in the work day mandated by law				
h. Probationary job status				
i. Unions or forming a union at work or talking about union activities at work				
j. What to do when a supervisor or boss is treating you unfairly or ignoring your rights				
k. Knowing workers' rights for when people are evaluated, or if people can be fired or laid off				

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2. How much do you think that you already know about the following:

	For each row, please check the box that applies to you			
	Not very confident	A Little confident	Very confident	Have all the information I need
a. What makes for good teamwork at work and what doesn't				
b. Job evaluations of you and your work if you work in a team				
c. What makes a good supervisor				
d. How to communicate to a supervisor about the work you are doing				
e. How to communicate to a team member about what would help the work go better				

3. One of your friends asks you for advice. He has been told he has to be 'more of a team player' at work. He asks you what that means and what he should do or shouldn't do. What would you tell him?

_____

_____

4. Have you ever discussed with a boss, a supervisor or a co-worker the way in which the work should be done? No _____ Yes _____

If yes, think about one time this happened, and answer questions 4a & 4b.

4a. If you answered "yes" to question 4, think about one time this happened and tell us: How confident are you that you were effective in communicating your ideas clearly?

Not very		Somewhat		Very	Completely
1	2	3	4	5	6

4b. If you answered "yes" to question 4, thing about one time this happened and tell us: How confident are you that you were effective in listening to others' ideas and understanding how others' ideas differed or agreed with your ideas?

Not very		Somewhat		Very	Completely
1	2	3	4	5	6

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5. **What skills make a good supervisor?**

_____

_____

6. **What do you want to know about supervisors and teamwork?**

I want to learn:

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Date: _____

Student Name _____

Teacher Name _____

Module 24
Supervisors and Teamwork

Instructions: With a partner, pick one of the situations below. Think about your response to the situation; and write an outline of the points you would make in that response. Present a role play to the class. Your instructor and the class will make comments and suggestions about your role play. Remember that it is important to show all points of view well in your presentation. Then, complete the summary page regarding what you learned from this module.

Situations

1. Roberto has been working at a small electronics company with 40 workers for 3 years. He likes the company but wants to be promoted and make more money. Create a role play showing Roberto asking to talk with his boss about a promotion.

2. Carlos and Everardo are friends. Carlos works for a landscape contractor. He is the only employee. He has a wife and 3 children. He likes his boss but there is no chance of his making more money. Make a role play showing Everardo giving Carlos advice as to what he could do to make more money.

3. Maria works at a Mexican restaurant as a waitress. She has been in the United States for 8 years but never had time to study English. Make a role play showing her asking the owner of the restaurant, her boss, for a change of schedule so she can study English 2 nights a week.

4. Francisco's father, Julio has worked at a vineyard for 9 years. He is a very good worker. The vineyard manager has just made him a mayordomo. Julio is not so sure he knows how to be a good supervisor. Francisco offers to ask his English teacher if he can give him some advice on how to be a good supervisor. Role play a conversation between the son, Francisco and the English teacher discussing what makes a good supervisor.

5. Jose works on a crew with 3 other men. The other men do not feel that Jose is a team player. The don't think he does his share of the work. Role play Jose and one of the other men talking about this problem.

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Key points to make in your role play

Please circle the situation you selected to role play.
Situation # **1** **2** **3** **4** **5**

Key point 1:

Key point 2:

Key point 3:

Key point 4:

Key point 5:

Key point 6:

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Summary, Page 1

What, if anything, I Have Learned from my work with this module about Supervisors and Teamwork

Related to:	What did you learn?	How will you use it?
What is teamwork		
How teamwork is useful on the job		
How to better communicate with co-workers or others at your work		
How to evaluate what kind of a teamplayer you are from an employer's perspective		
How to talk to your supervisor about a raise or promotion		
How to offer suggestions at work		
What makes a good supervisor		
Compensation time regulations versus Overtime versus flex time		

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Summary, Page 2

Related to:	What did you learn?	How will you use it?
Family leave or personal leave		
Cal OSHA safety regulations for your job or workplace		
Job dress codes		
Breaks in the work day mandated by law		
Probationary job status		
Unions or forming a union at work or talking about union activities at work		
What to do when a supervisor or boss is treating you unfairly or ignoring your rights		
Knowing workers' rights for when people are evaluated, or if people can be fired or laid off		
Is there something else you learned from this module? Please specify		